

**PARK BOARD MEETING  
Foster Community Center  
March 9, 2016**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Rick Kibbey, Veronica Gracia-Wing, Bryan Beverly, Rosalinda Hernandez, Paul Holland, Rita O'Brien, James McClurken

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gib King

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation Director; Kellie Brown, Board Secretary; Billie J O'Berry, City Attorney Office; Paul Pratt, Pat Lindemann, Ingham County Drain Commission; Tim Inman, Dennis Louney, Spicer Group; Brian Cenci, ENG Engineering; Dick Peffley, Stephen Serkaian, Wayne Lynn, Calvin Jones, Dave Bolan, Chris Knudstrup; Lansing Board of Water and Light (LBWL); Chris Stralkowski, Ferguson Development; Loretta Stanaway; Cristy Bennett, Lansing Garden Club; Melissa Quon Huber; Todd Heywood; Jim Perkins; Dwight Washington

**CALLED TO ORDER:** 7:00 p.m. by Vice President Gracia-Wing

**ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

None

**STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS**

None – will be on agenda items

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Bryan Beverly moved to approve the February 19, 2016 minutes as submitted; seconded by Jim McClurken.  
6 yeas; 0 nays

**Motion carried.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

Pat Lindemann, Ingham County Drain Commissioner, stated the Montgomery Drain has been a planned project since 1995 and it is close to being done. Lindemann presented a slide show on the amount of water, type of water, pollutants, etc. from the Montgomery Drain. In order to complete this project there are three (3) easements required from the City that need to be approved by the Park Board; one is a conservation easement required by the DEQ and two easements are for access.

This project and development will create 1,500 to 2,000 permanent jobs.

The Clean Water Act of 1972 is federally mandated and requires the water be cleaned and eliminate discharge of pollutants.

Drainage into the Montgomery Drain comes from Lansing Township, East Lansing, Lansing, and the highway department. Water from US127 goes directly into the river with all of the pollutants.

This project is partially funded by two grants; one is the Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW) grant for \$1.3 million dollar (which is confirmed) and the other is a state MDNR grant in the amount of \$500,000 that is awaiting confirmation.

The system is meant to capture, slow down and treat water. Free board is based on old terminology but is still used today to refer to the storing of water.

In order to complete the drain project, there need to be projects built on Ranney and Red Cedar Parks. Lindemann reviewed conceptual drawings of the ponds, paths, hills, and proposed development sites. All the dirt removed will be added to the sledding hill at Ranney Park. The plan with the sledding hill is to face it north to avoid melting of the snow on sunny days and prolong the sledding season.

Lindemann stated for every tree they remove for this project, three new trees will be planted. This land is not buildable and the developer will need to build a flat surface called a plinth, which is a support surface 1 to 2 feet above the 100 year flood plain.

Lindemann stated he cannot move forward without the easements. He currently has easements for Ranney and Red Cedar Parks, but they need to be expanded to support this project.

Lindemann provided copies of the easements. This needs to go back to the Planning Board and be approved before March 28. The conservation easement secures wetlands remain and are maintained for perpetuity. The DEQ will monitor to ensure this is being done.

Rick Kibbey stated on page 6 of outline of the project, the Mayor's name is spelled incorrectly.

Brett Kaschinske inquired about mowing in the area and who would be responsible. Lindemann stated he does not plan to mow the snow hill in the summer, it is best to keep the grass on the hill. Kaschinske stated we currently mow a path in the middle for hill running. Lindemann stated there will be several varieties of ornamental grass used to avoid the need for mowing all areas as well as provide foliage for animals and prevent soil erosion. Other grasses will be used to provide a strong root system and prevent erosion. Lindemann stated his crew will mow the required areas, and the engineer will be working with a botanist. Lindemann also stated his intention is to provide snow removal.

Rick Kibbey stated there are three (3) easements. Lindemann stated he provided a resolution which includes all three easements.

Lindemann stated language may be added to the resolution to include mowing. Lindemann stated he would also like to discuss with Kaschinske trash receptacles and pickup as well as lighting in areas at night for crews who may need to respond to an emergency.

Kibbey confirmed there are three (3) easements, Lindemann stated yes and the resolution includes all three to act on at once.

Kaschinske inquired about the parcel numbers and are they reflecting the entire parcel or easement area.

Brian Cenci, from ENG Engineering, referred to the plan agreement and the drawings of the proposed easement area.

Bryan Beverly moved to approve the easements as presented; Paul Holland seconded the motion. 7 Yeas; 0 Nays

No further discussion by the Board.

**Motion carried.**

**BWL Central Substation**

Loretta Stanaway read from a Facebook post regarding this project and opposition to the destruction of the Scott Center and Sunken Gardens. She also commented that with the list of items on the agenda this evening, it appears there is a fire sale in the Parks Department and if this continues to properties that were donated, people will not donate in the future.

Rick Kibbey stated this donation came after Mrs. Scott tore her house down. This is the Jenison House which was moved to the property and it has not been used for a decade. The department is not equipped to maintain vacant property and the gardens fell into disarray and have only been maintained the last few years.

Stanaway stated there are a lot of people who have used the garden in its current location.

Kibbey stated the drawings he has seen would bring the river and the garden into public use. We have a property inaccessible to the public and it has sat vacant for years. There is a proposal for a new use which has an economic value for downtown and for recreational property.

Stanaway pointed out who let the building fall into disrepair and who was responsible for it.

Bryan Beverly inquired about an update from the Lansing Garden Club.

Brett Kaschinske stated he met with the Garden Club at the charrette and there is a member here this evening. Communication and discussion continues with the Garden Club regarding this project.

Cristy Bennett stated she is the current President of the Garden Club. This was a shock to the group, they learned about this project the morning of February 8 before it was announced publicly. They have met with representatives from the Board of Water and Light. They have maintained the gardens since the 1980's. There have been a handful of members who have maintained the gardens. There is a meeting next week which is the monthly Garden Club meeting and Brett Kaschinske and Bob Ford will be there to present plans, designs and answer questions. The Garden Club Board met and they are going to ask if the garden could be located to another site. Kaschinske stated yes.

Kibbey asked about information on the sunken garden.

Cristy Bennett stated some of the original plants still exist. The garden was created by Mr. Scott in the 1930's. As he traveled he brought plants back from all over to plant in the garden. Bennett showed pictures of the garden from the 1980's before they took it over and what terrible shape the garden was in from drought and neglect.

The Garden Club has questions and they would like to see the opportunities that are possible. She mentioned this issue has received attention at the state level.

Kibbey stated across the parking lot is Cooley Gardens that had a seasonal staff working there and it was a show piece. That employee retired and now that garden needs attention. Bennett stated the Garden Club is not interested in maintaining Cooley.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired if there was a position at the state level. Bennett stated no there is not.

Veronica Gracia-Wing inquired about a succession plan for the group and the next generation. Bennett stated there is no plan.

Melissa Quon-Huber stated they put surveys out on line and preservation of the house is important and the public is willing to pay more to put the substation underground. The stakeholders were not informed and this project was rushed. The Park Board should be asking difficult questions and there is a negative feel toward the Board. Also, the relationship with the LBWL has gone backwards.

Dwight Washington stated it is valuable to listen to the public.

Josh Reasoner inquired about alternate locations, what the limitations are, cost to LBWL customers for additional funds for the project.

Bryan Beverly asked for a response from LBWL.

Chris Knudstrup stated the LBWL did review alternate locations. They started with General Motors 2 years ago. They thought they were making progress, but far into the negotiations corporate representatives from GM stepped in and said there were plans for the site. LBWL discussed other sites for GM, included the Mayor and received the same response that their sites were off the table.

Knudstrup stated they looked south by the generator plant, which would remove homes from the tax roll and displace residents. The Deluxe Inn site is not large enough and would require going east into the Main Street apartments. The Seventh Day Adventist site, which is on the other side of 496, would require transmission lines over 496 and is further away. They also looked at repurposing the Eckert Plant, which is in the flood zone, would require lines under the railroad and a protective berm.

Paul Holland inquired after Eckert is decommissioned what the plans are.

Dick Peffley stated it is set to be shut down in 2020 and the plan is to work with LEAP for redevelopment similar to what was done with the Accident Fund.

Dick Peffley stated a 1% rate increase generates approximately \$4,000,000 in revenue annually.

Paul Holland inquired about the second best location which is the Seventh Day Adventist site, but that would also remove two historic sites and costs more.

Melissa Quon Huber stated the two year planning process should have been put before the public.

Dick Peffley stated that is hard to do, because the LBWL becomes a hostage in negotiations and the cost of the property increases.

Steve Serkaian stated they have met with Preservation Lansing and LBWL committed to paying to have the house moved. They are committed to working with the Garden Club to move or relocate the garden.

Loretta Stanaway inquired about the height of the wall, which she heard was 40 feet. Chris Knudstrup stated the walls are 20 feet, but could be as high as 40 feet on the river bank due to the grade.

Jim McClurken referenced the Facebook post and knows it costs money to preserve an old home and the City could ask for a private individual to take over. He has not been in the house and it should be appraised for damage and the cost of removal.

McClurken stated there is not enough information to review at this time and he cannot vote.

Gracia-Wing agreed that there is not enough information to vote and shares the sentiments tonight and is not comfortable voting this evening.

Paul Holland stated he has spent several years involved in REO Town and the amount of work to make improvements in the area. He is not categorically opposed to this, it is a big hurdle and he appreciates the work in the design to make it a recreational area also. Before going forward he would like to see financials for other sites and the costs to the customers. LBWL has been in discussion with REO Town. He would like to see the wall brought down to a human scale to incorporate a recreational aspect such as bikes or canoes to interact with the public.

Paul Holland moved to table this matter for a month until more information can be presented. 7 years; 0 days to table this matter until the April meeting.

**Motion carried.**

Board would like a real appraisal cost, provide a walk through, financials for the alternate sites, marginable costs, costs amortized and costs to the LBWL customers.

The Board would also like a report on the outcome of the meetings with Preservation Lansing and the Garden Club.

**Sale of Willoughby**

Tabled until April meeting

**CIP Budget**

Brett Kaschinske stated list of CIPP projects for the 2017 Fiscal Year need to be submitted prior to the end of the month for budget.

Paul Holland inquired if the splash pad is replacing the pool. Kaschinske stated the splash pad can go anywhere in the city and we have heard both sides from the neighborhood regarding a splash pad at Moores.

This is not an action item requiring a vote. Board members are provided 5 selections to put on their recommendations from the list; this could be 1 selection on five items or all 5 selections on one project. Since this does not require a vote and in the essence of time, please e-mail your recommendations to Kellie no later than Friday, March 18.

**Windlord**

Jim Perkins provided background information on the Windlord sculpture, provided a letter from the sculptor and presented a slide show of photos of the sculpture, condition, current location, and proposed new site at the traffic circle at Washington and Michigan Avenues.

Riverfront Park was a temporary location and the base has been repaired but has begun to deteriorate. The sculptor has stated after so many years he is willing to pick up this project and move the sculpture to the originally planned site.

Kibbey inquired about the cost to move the sculptor. Jim stated it would be minimal because it is on a separate foundation so it would be similar to moving a car.

Bryan Beverly inquired what the next steps are.

Jim stated if the Park Board would like to do this, it would go to the Mayor and there would need to be community fund raising by a private party.

Brett Kaschinske stated may need to look at the State requirements since this could be a trunk line.

Rosalinda Hernandez stated she is not comfortable with the “spirit” aspect and it being in the center of downtown.

Jim McClurken would like a resolution to move forward at the next board meeting. He would act as the liaison between the Park Board and private parties.

McClurken wants to put together a letter and the pictures for the next meeting for a vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted: Kellie Brown, Park Board Secretary

Approved April 14, 2016